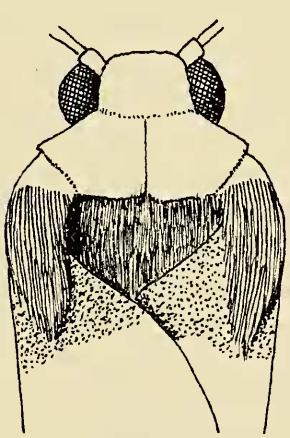
A FURTHER DIAGNOSTIC FEATURE FOR THE SEPARATION OF *EILEMA LURIDEOLA* ZINCKEN AND *E. COMPLANA* L. (LEP.: ARCTIIDAE)

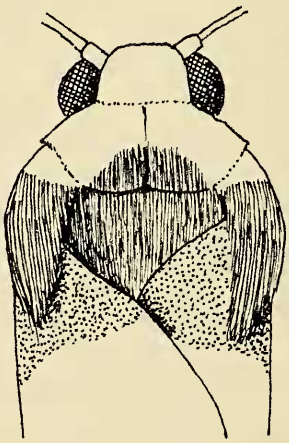
By ADRIAN M. RILEY*

The standard diagnostic feature for the separation of these two species is the attenuation of the costal streak at the apex of the forewing in *E. lurideola.* In *E. complana* this streak remains parallel to the costa through to the wing fringes. (See Skinner, B. 1984. *Colour Identification Guide to Moths of the British Isles,* p. 180).

However, in the field, or when dead, unset, individuals are being examined it is difficult to use this character as these two species (particularly *complana*) roll their wings around their bodies in roughly tubular fashion, often hiding the forewing apices from view. Under these circumstances it is often better to use the following alternative feature.



Eilema complana



Eilema lurideola

Figure 1 shows the head and mesothoracic regions of the two species. In *E. complana* the patagia are completely orange, resulting in a straight border between themselves and the mesothorax. This gives the appearance of a neat "collar". In *E. lurideola* the patagia are grey in the centre, resulting in a C-shaped "collar".

Although the grey centre to the patagia is mentioned in some descriptions of *E. lurideola* (e.g. Heath, J. 1979. *Moths & Butterflies of Great Britain & Ireland.* Vol. 9, p.94) it has never been stressed as a useful diagnostic character. However, I have found it to be the most reliable and convenient feature to use when identifying Rothamsted Insect Survey light trap catches or live specimens in the field.

*Entomology Department, Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden, Hertfordshire.